

REVISED FECA REGULATIONS

1. On November 25, 1998, new regulations for claims under the FECA were published in the Federal Register. They took effect on January 4, 1999. You can access them through the internet at the following address:
<http://gatekeeper.dol.gov/dol/esa/public/regs/fedreg/final/98031190.htm>. It is quite lengthy, over 100 pages.
2. Publication and distribution of a new circular highlighting the changes is expected to be available soon. New publications and new forms can be viewed and downloaded from the following : **Bulletins, Circulars, & Transmittals Issued in Fiscal Year 1999**. Look for FECA Circular No. 99-04. Many of the changes are designed to enhance the return-to-duty process in a more timely way.
3. Some of the major highlights include:

COP: The use of COP must now begin within 45 days instead of 90 days after disability begins or when a recurrence occurs. Sunday premium pay for time not actually worked may no longer be included in COP. There is also a change in Section 10.222 which allows agencies to terminate COP when a personnel action (initiated before the injury and including a removal action) becomes final following the injury and during the COP period.

FORMS: The **CA-3** and **CA-12** are **discontinued**. Be aware the Forms CA-7a and CA-7b have been added to the program; these forms are for the agency and the worker to determine and request leave buyback.

RTD: Section 10.210 of the final changes to 20 CFR Parts 10 & 25 under the Return to Work Section, "Employees Responsibilities", states that an employees responsibility is to obtain a medical report supporting a disability that contains a statement as to when the employee can return to work.

OTHER:

*Section 10.331b says that the **CA-17** can be used for both traumatic injuries and occupational disease claims to determine the injured workers restrictions.

*Section 10.506 states that an employer may contact an injured workers doctor in writing concerning the work limitations, with a copy sent to OWCP, **but may not contact the physician by telephone or through personal visit.**

*Section 10.609 has increased the time for an employer to respond to a reconsideration hearing from 15 to 20 days.

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